



California Postsecondary Education Commission

Minutes of the Governmental Relations Committee Teleconference Meeting of March 3, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Howard Welinsky, Chair
John P. Perez
Ralph R. Pesqueira
H. Eric Schockman
Olivia K. Singh, ex officio

OTHER COMMISSIONER PRESENT

George W. Nickel

CALL TO ORDER

Governmental Relations Committee Chair Howard Welinsky called the March 3, 2008, meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

CALL OF THE ROLL

Chair Welinsky was present; committee members John Perez, Ralph Pesqueira, Commission Chair Olivia Singh, and Commissioner George W. Nickel were all present via telephone. Committee member Eric Schockman joined the meeting via telephone at 3:04 p.m.

PROSPECTIVE LEGISLATIVE FOR THE SECOND YEAR OF THE 2007-08 SESSION

Chair Welinsky introduced the two legislative items on the agenda: a draft staff report *Legislative Update: March 2008*; and a staff document summarizing the proposed actions on the bills. He asked the committee to refer to the summary document. Chair Welinsky asked the committee to adopt, by motion, the staff-suggested positions for all of the bills with a “Watch” position on the summary. He reminded the committee that all of the actions taken by the Committee would be recommended for action by the full Commission at its upcoming meeting. He asked that two of the staff-suggested “Watch” bills — AB 2372 (Coto) and AB 2496 (Huffman) — be pulled from this list and held for individual discussion and committee action.

Legislative Director Julia Blair explained to the committee that the summary document incorrectly listed the staff-recommended positions on two bills. She said that AB 2366 (Portantino), listed as a recommended “Watch,” should read: “Support, if amended,” and that AB 2489 (Arambula), listed as a recommended “Support,” should read: “Support, if amended.” Ms. Blair noted that the recommended positions on these bills in the *Legislative Update* are correct.

Chair Welinsky noted these corrections and asked the committee to approve the revised list of bills for which the staff recommended a “Watch” position:

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SB 890 (Scott)	AB 2366 (Portantino)	SB 1219 (Cedillo)
AB 1409 (Portantino)	AB 2458 (Walters)	SB 1288 (Scott)
AB 1821 (Portantino)	AB 2722 (Duvall)	SB 1290 (Wyland)
AB 2277 (Eng)	AB 2746 (Niello)	SB 1393 (Scott)
AB 2365 (De La Torre)	ACR 91 (Mendoza)	SB 1457 (Steinberg)

The motion to adopt “Watch” positions on these bills was approved unanimously by the committee for recommendation to the full Commission.

Chair Welinsky then introduced the Commission’s new Legislative Director, Julia Blair, and asked her to report on the remaining bills on the legislative summary, including those with a staff-recommended “Support” position, and the two previously identified “Watch” bills. Ms. Blair began by directing the committee to the section titled “Old Bills – Pending Action,” which listed proposed legislation from the first year of the session that have been continued into the second year. She presented the two bills with staff-suggested “Support” positions: AB 100 (Mullin), the 2008 Education Facilities Bond Act; and SB 325 (Scott), which would establish a higher education accountability system. After brief discussion, Commission Chair Singh moved, and committee member Pesqueira seconded, a motion to adopt a “Support” positions on these two bills.

Ms. Blair then moved to the section of the summary titled “New Bills.” These bills are of potential interest to the Commission and were either first introduced or significantly amended during the second year of the legislative session. Ms. Blair presented a list of bills for which staff proposed a “Support” position:

AB 2083 (Nunez)	AB 2485 (Furutani)	SB 1585 (Padilla)
AB 2261 (Ruskin)	SB 361 (Scott)	SB 1621 (Ashburn)
AB 2365 (De La Torre)	SB 1158 (Scott)	SB 1656 (Romero)
AB 2469 (Brownley)	SB 1301 (Cedillo)	

The committee discussed these bills and the proposed positions on each. Chair Welinsky asked and received motions to adopt a “Support” position on each bill for recommendation to the full Commission. These motions were each approved unanimously by the committee.

The committee voted to change the staff-proposed “Support” position to “Support – Sponsor” for AB 2876 (Furutani) and for SB 1355 (Corbett). Both bills deal with improving student loan disclosure information to students.

The committee changed the staff-recommended positions for four bills. The committee discussed AB 2082 (Salas) and voted to change the staff proposed “Support” position to “Watch.” The committee also discussed and separately adopted a “Watch” position on AB 2372 (Coto). The committee discussed and voted to change to “Support, if amended” on SB 2296 (Mullin) and AB 2496 (Huffman).

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The committee also voted to adopt the proposed “Support, if amended” positions on AB 2366 (Portantino) and AB 2489 (Arambula).

PROPOSED COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS ON HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES IN THE PROPOSED 2008-09 STATE BUDGET

Chair Welinsky called on Budget Policy Coordinator Kevin Woolfork to present a staff report, *Budget Perspectives and Proposed Commission Recommendations* on the Governor’s Budget. He highlighted five principles that staff proposed the committee should adopt to guide staff positions on specific budget items. These are:

- Support students first
- Maximize and expand efficiencies
- Minimize increases in student fees
- Maintain predictability
- Build in flexibility

Committee member Pesqueira asked if the student fees referenced in the report were mandatory fees or charges specific to certain courses. Mr. Woolfork responded that the report and policies address only mandatory systemwide student fees. Committee Chair Welinsky asked for a motion approving the recommended budget policy positions for presentation to the full Commission. Committee member Schockman moved, seconded by committee member Pesqueira, to approve the report. The motion was approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Chair Welinsky adjourned the Commission’s Governmental Relations Committee meeting at 4:47 p.m.